

in cases of contracted pelvis, but in placenta praevia, eclampsia, and less frequent complications. Judging from the literature the results have been most satisfactory, both maternal and infant mortality having been considerably reduced in certain classes of cases. From a review of last year's literature on hebosteotomy the impression is gained that less enthusiasm has been shown for the procedure, although Williams of Johns Hopkins University in reporting 25 cases expresses a very favorable opinion of the operation.

The perusal of this excellent résumé of the year's progress in obstetrics leaves the very pleasant impression that scientific methods now more than ever before overshadow the empiric practice of a few years ago and that now once and for all time obstetrics takes its place in scientific accomplishment beside its sister specialties, general surgery and gynecology.

Dislocation and Joint Fractures. By Frederic J. Cotton, A. M., M. D. Publishers, W. B. Saunders Company, 1910.

In this volume of 650 pages, Dr. Cotton has adhered closely to the title, so that no mention is made of fractures of the shafts of bones. As a matter of fact, the omission of shaft fractures is of little importance, for he has covered the subject of fractures in and near joints so thoroughly that the principles involved can readily be applied to all fractures, excluding of course a consideration of fractures of the skull, which is really a department of brain surgery. It is decidedly refreshing to find that the book is not filled with old illustrations, so many of which are out-of-date and incorrect. The present volume has 1201 illustrations of which 830 are from drawings by the author. Dr. Cotton deserves much praise for his skill as an artist—his work in that respect is well known to those who have seen Scudder's "Treatment of Fractures." Many roentgenographs have also been utilized to illustrate the text and the author has not hesitated to retouch them when necessary to bring out details. More important than all, however, the author has succeeded in his "Attempt to make the illustrations much more integrally a part of the text than has been the rule in medical book-making."

The experience of the author has been extensive, yet he is modest in his opinions. One of his statements in his Introduction should be of value to those who are apt to be routinists: "There is bound to be a broadening recognition of the fact that each fracture is a mechanical problem in itself, so far, at least, as reduction is concerned. The more we study fractures and luxations, the more we see how definitely they fall into series of roughly constant types; but these types are not constant in detail, and the ancient custom of treating a fracture with a given form of reduction, or putting it up in A's or B's splint, is no longer adequate practice." Cotton's statement that "Non-union usually means delayed union," might have been questioned a number of years ago, but is true to-day because the practitioner knows better how to care for fractures.

The question of operative treatment of fractures is an important one, and as Cotton's views in this matter are in accord with those of many of the best surgeons in this country, they deserve to be quoted as fully as space will permit: "There is some danger that such operating may get to be too common; already a good deal of unnecessary work is being done, practically by rather inexperienced men. I am not one of those who believe in indiscriminate operating in simple fractures—certainly it is not called for now, nor in the future do I expect that it will be. I do believe, however, that there is a large field of usefulness for those whose experience renders such work reasonably safe and certain, in order to remedy, (or, still better, to prevent) most of those innumerable cases that have been a reproach to the

profession—excused in the past because in the past no better results were obtainable, to-day no longer excusable." "Operations should, as a rule, be postponed for a week or ten days from the date of injury; at this time clot organization has begun, and the chance of sepsis is less." There are also many other references to operative treatment in the consideration of special fractures and dislocations. Cotton advocates the simplest means of fixation—kangaroo tendon, nails or staples, but does not favor plates, screws or intramedullary splints. "The less foreign material the tissues have to adapt themselves to, the better." In the employment of drills and screws driven through skin and soft tissues into bone for fixation purposes, the reviewer differs from Cotton. There are many cases of osteomyelitis and infection of the soft tissues following the application of Parkhill's or Lambotte's clamps or other similar apparatus and until we have some positive means of preventing sepsis from external-internal apparatus, we should not employ it. The author has been careful to give each subject its due measure of importance and does not seem to be a faddist in any way. The chapters on dislocations and fractures of the shoulder and elbow are particularly well written. In regard to gunstock deformity of the arm, Cotton emphasizes the point that it is due to a fracture above the condyles of the humerus or to an epiphyseal separation and that it does not result from fracture of either condyle alone.

The book will not be particularly useful to students except for reference, but for the general practitioner and the surgeon it is an authoritative work and will rank with the best we have.

W. I. T.

A MENACE TO THE PUBLIC WELFARE.

Washington, D. C., April 28, 1910.

The alarming extent to which habit-forming drugs are used and the various channels through which they reach the public.

United States Department of Agriculture, Division of Publications. Jos. A. Arnold, editor and chief.

In its effort to protect the innocent public against the insidious effects of preparations containing drugs injurious to health, the United States Department of Agriculture has issued another Farmers' Bulletin treating on the subject so nearly connected with public health.

Farmers' Bulletin No. 377, "The Harmfulness of Headache Mixtures," was issued in September, 1909, and 70,000 copies have been distributed to those interested in the subject; now Farmers' Bulletin No. 393, "Habit-Forming Agents: Their Indiscriminate Sale and Use a Menace to the Public Welfare," giving the results of recent investigations by the department, has just been issued as a warning to mothers, invalids, and users of medicated soft drinks, of the dangerous contents of many of the infant syrups, so-called remedies, and soft drinks containing cocain, caffein, etc.

It is almost unbelievable that any one for the sake of a few dollars would concoct for infant use a pernicious mixture containing cocain, but several such mixtures have been found and their names published, together with a list of remedies intended for infants and containing morphin, codein, opium, cannabis indica, heroin, which are widely advertised, and are accompanied by the assertion that they "contain nothing injurious to the youngest babe," and that "mothers need not fear giving them it as no bad effects come from their continued use," while as a matter of fact numerous instances are on record of babies being put to sleep never to wake again, or, where they did not succumb, the more serious effect of infant drug addiction was produced.

Yet the majority of mothers ignorant of these